

Message Text

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13

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01

OMB-01 DRC-01 AID-20 /108 W
----- 127038

R 171020Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8160

INFO AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 18099

1. DEPARTMENT WILL HAVE SEEN OCT. 16 UPI STORY RELATING A "SIDE WALK PRESS CONFERENCE" BY MADAME NGO THANH AT WHICH SHE HISTORICALLY ACCUSED THE GVN OF INSTIGATING HOOLIGANS TO BREAK WINDOWS OF HER CAR AND PHYSICALLY ASSAULT HER. DURING VN PRESS CONFERENCE PM OCTOBER 17, OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN BUI BAO TRUC DENIED THE CHARGES.

THE SPOKESMAN ASSERTED THAT MADAME THANH "COMMITTED A MISTAKE" IN ATTRIBUTING THE ASSAULT TO THE GOVERNMENT, RECALLING REPORTS THAT A GANG IS OPERATING IN SAIGON WHICH SPECIALIZES IN BREAKING CAR WINDOWS AND THEN COERCING THE VICTIMS TO PURCHASE REPLACEMENT GLASS AT A HIGH PRICE.

2. THE GVN SPOKESMAN ALSO SAID THAT THE GVN HAS NEVER ASSERTED IT WOULD DENY THE PROTECTION OF LAW TO THOSE WHO PRETEND TO BE MEMBERS OF THE "THIRD FORCE." RATHER, HE HAD SAID THAT " NO SECURITY MEASURES COULD GUARANTEE SAFETY" TO THOSE " CONCEITED PERSONS" WHO INSIST ON REFERRING TO THE GRVN AS THE "SAIGON REGIME."

3. COMMENT: WHATEVER THE TRUTH OF MADAME THANH'S ALLEGATION OF OFFICIAL COMPLICITY IN THE ALLEGED ASSAULT, THERE SEEMS LITTLE DOUBT THAT MADAME THANH IS INCREASING HER VISIBILITY.

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MARTIN

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